

REMARKS

Claims 1-43 are pending in the present application. By virtue of this response, claims 1, 7, 11, 17, 24, 25, and 32 have been amended. Accordingly, claims 1-43 are currently under consideration. Amendment and cancellation of certain claims is not to be construed as a dedication to the public of any of the subject matter of the claims as previously presented.

Claim Rejections Under 35 USC §102

Claims 1-10, 12, 15-23, 25-31, 33, and 34 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as allegedly being unpatentable over Soetemans et al., US Pub. No.: US 2003/0058618 A1 (hereinafter Soetemans).

The feature “network interface for communication between the plug-in network and an external network” has been added to claim 1. Support for the amendment to claim 1 may be found in the specification at, for example, paragraph 20: “In one version, the underlying circuit 40 includes a multiple100baseT Ethernet connector 46 for connecting the local network 42 to an external network.” (Specification, Paragraph 20). The network interface of amended claim 1 may also be seen in Figure 3, as block 46 labeled “2 Port 10baseT switch network.” Applicant respectfully submits that Soetemans does not disclose or suggest a network interface directly included in a network backplane interface device. Soetemans discloses communication between “subshelves” but does not disclose a communication interface component of an interface device that communicates directly with an external network, i.e., without using a plug-in device that would use a socket on the backplane. Claim 7 has been amended to recite that feature of the version described above in which the network interface comprises a multiple100baseT Ethernet connector.

Furthermore, the Examiner cites Soetemans in support of the rejections of claim 4. Applicant respectfully submits that Soetemans does not disclose or suggest “wherein the configuration circuit communicates with a plug-in device in a socket to identify the plug-in device and configure the plug-in device for network communication,” as recited by claim 4. Instead,

Soetemans discloses “shelf controllers” 120a, 120b that “provide control, diagnostic, accounting and management services to each of the subshelves 110a-d and to components (for example line processing cards) installed in subshelves 110a-d.” (Soetemans, paragraph 18). Soetemans is silent as to configuration of one or more plug-in devices, however. Applicant respectfully submits that Soetemans’s disclosure of “control diagnostic, accounting, and management services” does not disclose or suggest configuration of one or more plug-in devices.

Further, Soetemans does not disclose or suggest “wherein the configuration circuit communicates with a plug-in device in a socket to identify the plug-in device and configure the plug-in device for network communication,” as claimed. Soetemans discloses “[t]hus common hotel services, are identified at step 600, common control services at step 610, and common communications services at step 620.” (Soetemans, paragraph 28). However, Soetemans does not disclose network communications as a common communications service. Instead, Soetemans discloses that “common communication services include the intrashelf communications channels provided between shelf controllers 120a-b and subshelves 110a-d as well as user interfacing communications provided by alarm panel 310 and display panel 130.” (Soetemans, paragraph 38). Applicant respectfully submits that Soetemans’s disclosure of those communication services does not disclose or suggest network communications on a network, and that claim 1 is therefore patentable over Soetemans. Applicant further submits that paragraph 33 of Soetemans, cited by the Examiner with reference to claim 7, does not disclose or suggest the features of claim 4, including “configure the plug-in device for network communication.” Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 4 is patentable over Soetemans.

Claims 2, 3, 5-10 and 12-16 depend from claim 1, and Applicant respectfully submits that claims 2, 3, 5-10 and 12-16 are patentable over the cited reference(s) for at least the reasons given above for claim 1.

Claim 17 has been amended similarly to claim 1, and Applicant respectfully submits that claim 17 is patentable over Soetemans for at least the reasons given above for claim 1.

Claims 18-24 depend from claim 17, and Applicant respectfully submits that claims 18-24 are patentable over the cited reference(s) for at least the reasons given above for claim 1.

Claim 25 has been amended similarly to claim 1, and Applicant respectfully submits that claim 25 is patentable over Soetemans for at least the reasons given above for claim 1.

Claims 26-34 depend from claim 25, and Applicant respectfully submits that claims 26-34 are patentable over the cited reference(s) for at least the reasons given above for claim 1.

Claims 35-43 depend from claim 1, and Applicant respectfully submits that claims 35-43 are patentable over the cited reference(s) for at least the reasons given above for claim 1.

Claim Rejections Under 35 USC §103

Claims 13 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Soetemans in view of Trans, U.S. Pub. No. 2002/0181633.

Applicant respectfully submits that claims 13 and 14 are patentable over Soetemans in view of Trans because claims 13 and 14 depend from claim 1 for at least the reasons given above, and the addition of Trans does not cure the defects of Soetemans.

Claims 11, 24, 32, 35-43 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Soetemans in view of Kim et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,473,788 (hereinafter Kim).

Applicant respectfully submits that claims 11, 24, 32, 35-43 are patentable over Soetemans in view of Kim because claims 11, 24, 32, 35-43 depend from claim 1 (or from claims that are amended similarly to claim 1) for at least the reasons given above, and the addition of Kim does not cure the defects of Soetemans.

Furthermore, for clarity, claims 11, 24, and 32 have been amended to recite “wherein the user interface is operable to configure the one or more plug-in devices in one session.” Support for the amendment to claim 11 may be found in the specification at, for example, paragraph 24: “For example, as shown in example user interface pages 62a, 62b, 62c in FIG. 5, similar steps can configure each component 38 in one session, whereby it is unnecessary to call up and execute a separate configuration software for each component 38 to configure that component 38.”

CONCLUSION

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the outstanding rejection of the claims and to pass this application to issue. If it is determined that a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number given below.

In the event the U.S. Patent and Trademark office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, applicant petitions for any required relief including extensions of time and authorizes the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to **Deposit Account No. 03-1952** referencing **Docket No. 249212014200**. However, the Commissioner is not authorized to charge the cost of the issue fee to the Deposit Account.

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Respectfully submitted,

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